

Great Bay Siltation Commission Meeting

NHDES Pease Field Office, Portsmouth, NH
October 22, 2007, 2:00 PM

Members: Rep. Judith Spang, Commission Chair, Durham
Rep. Dennis Abbott, Newmarket
Rep. Harry Merrow, Ossipee
Cynthia Copeland, Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Ted Diers, NH Coastal Program
Doug Grout, NH Fish & Game Department
Jennifer Hunter, NH Estuaries Project
Ray Konisky, The Nature Conservancy
Justin Richardson, Newington Conservation Commission
Tracy Shattuck, Pease Development Authority-Division of Port & Harbors
Fred Short, University of New Hampshire
Larry Ward, University of New Hampshire
Alison Watts, Newfields Conservation Commission

Other Attendees: David Cedarholm, Town of Durham
Christian Williams, NH Coastal Program

Summary:

Dr. Fred Short of the University of New Hampshire gave a presentation entitled "Impacts of Sediment Loading and Siltation in the Great Bay Estuary." Dr. Short's presentation focused on the affects of sediment loading and siltation on eelgrass populations. He reviewed historic and current eelgrass distribution within Great Bay and it tributaries, the likely causes of the decline in eelgrass cover and biomass in these areas, and potential areas within the estuary that may be suitable for eelgrass restoration. Question and answer followed.

Chairperson Spang then stated that the Commission would be able to accomplish its duties within the timeframes established by HB 216 most effectively if it created subcommittees. Discussion then followed regarding the primary topic(s) that should be the focus of the subcommittees. It was agreed that two subcommittees would be established, one focusing on the causes of siltation within the Great Bay estuary and the other focusing on the effects of siltation, including ecological, economic and social effects. Members were asked to participate in the subcommittee that most closely complimented their professional expertise and interest.

A brief discussion followed regarding potential topics and candidates for future presentations to the Commission. Members agreed that presentations by the UNH Stormwater Center and the DES Alteration of Terrain Bureau would provide valuable insight into the causes of sedimentation and stormwater runoff to the Great Bay estuary.

The next commission meeting was scheduled for Monday, November 19, 2007 at 2:00 PM at the NHDES Pease Office in Portsmouth.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.